

A Note on *Myriophyllum*

By JAMES SINCLAIR

Botanic Gardens, Singapore.

On looking through the material of *Limnophila* in the Singapore Herbarium I came across several sheets of a plant from Kedah and Perlis wrongly named *Limnophila heterophylla*. These actually belong to a *Myriophyllum* which I have identified as *M. tuberculatum* Roxb. The numbers concerned are Corner S.F.N. 37985; Curtis 2102 and Henderson S. F. Nos. 22907 and 22908. The two Curtis sheets had originally been named *Myriophyllum intermedium* but this name is deleted by C. X. Furtado and *Limnophila heterophylla* substituted. The rest of the material was named by M. R. Henderson.

Under the genus *Myriophyllum* itself there is not a lot of material in this herbarium. In fact the only record from the Malay Peninsula is a sheet, J. A. Baker s.n. 30th October 1939 from near Alor Star, Kedah. This is named *M. tuberculatum* and is stated, on the label, to be the first definite record for the Malay Peninsula. The Curtis material, however, was collected in November 1889, the two Henderson sheets 18th November 1929 and Corner's on 14th November 1941.

Ridley in *Fl. Mal. Pen.* 1 (1922) 692 states "*Myriophyllum intermedium* DC. Malacca, Griffith, probably on Mt. Ophir. No specimen occurs in Griffith's collections at Kew, nor is it mentioned in the *F.B.I.* Mt. Ophir is a most improbable locality for this pondweed".

M. R. Henderson in *Gard. Bull. Sing.* 7, 2 (1933) 103 in a paper entitled *Additions to the Flora of the Malay Peninsula* has "*Myriophyllum* sp. Johore: Bukit Tiga, Sungai Sedili, Corner sine num. Common by edge of river from Kuala Bohol to a short way below Bukit Tiga. Does not grow in the salt water of the mangrove reaches. Malay name: *Rumput Ekor Kuching*. Unfortunately only the submersed stems and leaves, without flowers or fruit have so far been found, so that it is impossible to say to what species it may belong. This is the first definite record of the family from the Malay Peninsula".

At first I could not find the above specimen. It was not filed under *Myriophyllum* so I came to the conclusion that it had been removed from that genus and put elsewhere by someone who disagreed with the identification. A search was made under other likely genera and I soon located it also under *Limnophila*. It had been put there by Corner who had later deleted the word *Myriophyllum* and added *Limnophila ?sessiliflora*. These alterations are in ink of a different and fresher shade than that of his original handwriting. The specimen was collected in March 1932. It is certainly a *Limnophila* and not a *Myriophyllum*, and unfortunately, as pointed out by Henderson, is sterile. The bushy tassels of leaves resembling a cat's tail (*ekor kuching*) are covered with, and somewhat hidden

by an epiphytic green alga which is present. There are two other specimens of *Limnophila* like it but these are also sterile and unnamed at the time of writing. One is from Kedah and the other from Kota Tinggi. These may or may not be *sessiliflora*. I am unable to identify them because of my lack of knowledge about *Limnophila* in the vegetative condition. I have no doubt that they could be identified by a person with experience in cultivating them. They could easily be grown in tanks and this would make an interesting study. *Myriophyllum tuberculatum* certainly resembles *Limnophila heterophylla* and *sessiliflora* vegetatively and for this reason there has been confusion over them in the Singapore Herbarium. Some of the more important references in the literature are now given for *M. tuberculatum* with the citation of specimens in the Singapore Herbarium.

Myriophyllum tuberculatum Roxb. Hort. Beng. (1814) 12 *nomen nudum*; Fl. Ind. 1 (1820) 471; 1 (1832) 451 and (1874) 151; A.D.C. Prodr. 3 (1828) 69; Miq. Fl. Ind. Bat. 1 (1) 4 (1855) 635; C.B. Cl. in Hk. f. Fl. Br. Ind. 2 (1878) 432; Peterson in Engl. & Prantl, Pflfam. 3, 7 (1893) 234 f.104 A-C; Schindler in Engl. Pflreich 23 (4, 225) (1905) 96 f.28 A-C; Sinclair in Bull. Bot. Soc. Beng. 9, 2 (1955) 94.

MALAY PENINSULA PERLIS: Kangar, Henderson S.F. Nos. 22907 (SING) and 22908 (SING).

KEDAH: Kuah, Langkawi, Corner S.F.N. 37985 (SING); Langkawi in paddy fields, Curtis 210? (SING); near Alor Star, J.A. Baker s.n. 30th October 1939 (SING).

MOLUCCAS HALMAHEIRA: Pajahi Road, District Weda, G.A.L. de Haan 1788 (A, BO, K, L, P, SING) only the SING specimen seen by me.

Most of the species in this genus are confined to Australia. Some are from New Zealand, Europe, North and South America, India and the Mascarene Islands, while *M. spicatum* is of world-wide distribution. *M. tuberculatum* is an East Bengal species and I have collected it at Cox's Bazar. I am surprised that it has not, so far, been recorded from Siam where *siamense* and *tetrandrum* grow. Neither has it been seen in Indo-China where there are five species, namely *bonii*, *intermedium*, *siamense*, *spicatum* and *tetrandrum*. See M.-L. Tardieu-Blot in *Flore du Cambodge du Laos et du Vietnam* 4 (1965) 124. *M. tuberculatum* is nearest to *tetrandrum* but has larger, minutely serrate, ovate bracteoles and a larger fruit which is tuberculate and not rugose-granulate. *M. tetrandrum* was first recorded in Malesia from Kendari, Celebes where it was collected by Beccari. See van Steenis in *Webbia* 8 (1952) 435. In Java, according to Backer and Bakhuizen f., *Flora Java*, 1 (1963) 266, the species are *M. brasiliense* (naturalized and locally abundant) and *M. dicoccum* (Lake Burnih, Madura). The latter was originally described from North Australia. In New Guinea there are probably several species. There is one resembling *verticillatum* from the Wissel Lake region, represented in the Singapore Herbarium by *Eyma* 4733.